

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AEC-11 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3054

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 3803

LONDON FOR GLEYSTEN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, ENGR, IS, EG, US

SUBJ: ISRAELI PRESS ON US/EGYPTIAN NUCLEAR REACTOR AGREEMENT

REF: TEL AVIV 3365 (PARA 2)

1. ACCORDING TO REPORTS APPEARING IN ISRAELI PRESS, TWO-MAN PANEL OF EXPERTS APPOINTED BY PRIMIN RABIN LAST MONTH (REFTEL) TO ASSESS DEGREE OF DANGER POSED TO ISRAEL BY EGYPTIAN ACQUISITION OF NUCLEAR REACTOR MADE THEIR REPORT TO JULY 7 CABINET MEETING. REPORTEDLY, EXPERTS OPINION WAS THAT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR EGYPTIANS TO SWITCH FROM A SUPERVISED REACTOR FOR POWER PRODUCTION TO MANUFACTURE OF NUCLEAR ARMS. LATTER, ACCORDING TO REPORT, REQUIRES ENTIRELY DIFFERNT KNOWHOW AND SCIENTISTS WITH ENTIRELY DIFFERENT QUALIFICATIONS. REPORT ADDS THAT FROM OBJECTIVE POINT OF VIEW, EGYPT MUST MAKE PROVISION FOR ENERGY NEEDS IN 1980'S.

2. PRESS ALSO CARRIED REPORT JULY 8 ATTRIBUTED TO WASHINGTON POST THAT US WILL INSIST UPON ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN ADHERENCE TO NPT AS CONDITION FOR SUPPLY OF NUCLEAR REACTORS. THIS REPORT WAS
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CONTRADICTED JULY 9, HOWEVER, BY MAARIV'S WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT

SEGEV WHO CITED AEC OFFICIALS AS STATING THAT US SCIENTISTS ARE NOW CONVINCED THAT NPT CANNOT PREVENT USE OF FISSIONABLE MATERIAL FOR MILITARY PURPOSES AND THAT SAFEGUARDS WRITTEN INTO US/ISRAELI AND US/EGYPTIAN AGREEMENTS FOR REACTOR SALES WILL BE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE IN CONTROLLING THIS PROBLEM THAN NPT.

3. COMMENT. PRESS REPORTS OF EXPERTS' OPINION ON US/EGYPTIAN NUCLEAR ARRANGEMENT CLOSELY PARALLEL WHAT INFORMED ISRAELIS HAVE TOLD US WOULD BE IN REPORT. IF PRESS REPORTS ARE ACCURATE, THIS SHOULD HAVE A CALMING EFFECT UPON ISRAELI PUBLIC. VELIOTES

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